

Eight Hours Between Work and Sleep: Research and Curriculum  
Development Based on the Concept of Leisure Found in Nineteenth-Century  
Genre and Still Life Painting.

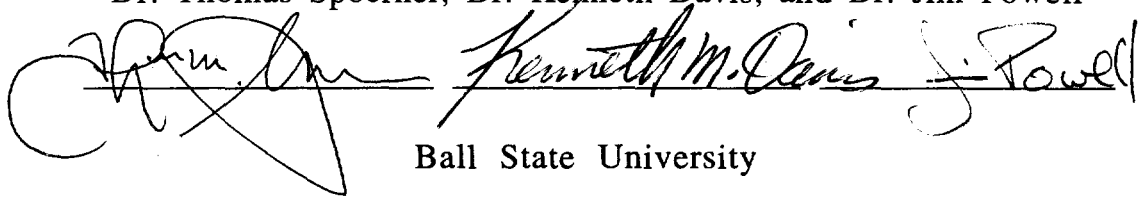
An Honors Thesis (HONORS 499)

by

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## Abstract

Since its creation, the Getty Center for Education in the Arts has been involved in the theoretical development and classroom implementation of Discipline-Based Art Education (DBAE). DBAE is a comprehensive approach to art education that draws upon four foundational art disciplines for its instructional content: art production, art history, art criticism, and aesthetics.

This Honors Project, *Eight Hours Between Work and Sleep: Research and Curriculum Development Based on the Concept of Leisure Found in Nineteenth-Century Genre and Still Life Painting*, is divided into three parts. Part I contains research on artists William Sidney Mount (1807-1868) and William Michael Harnett (1848-1892) and how their works coexist with the concept of leisure. Part II consists of a Unit on Leisure, developed in accordance with the Indiana State Proficiencies in Art Education for grades 6-9. It focuses this multifaceted approach (DBAE) toward teaching children how to create, understand, and appreciate works of art. Part II continues with Reflections and Conclusions which act as summation for the entire experience surrounding the Honors Project. Part III contains the Bibliography.

The goals of this project are as follows:

1. To focus on Art History as a valuable foundation of a unit
2. To practice the development and implementation of a unit which  
is consistent with the Indiana State Proficiency guidelines
3. To utilize mentoring relationships between students, teachers, and  
professors alike
4. To learn from the writer's reflections
5. To offer a valuable tool for both current and future art educators

## Acknowledgements

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## **Part I**

# **Eight Hours Between Work and Sleep: A Look at Leisure in Nineteenth-Century Genre and Still Life Painting**

## Eight Hours Between Work and Sleep: A Look at Leisure in Nineteenth-Century Genre and Still Life Painting

'All work and no play makes Johnny a dull boy' is a phrase we have all heard at one time or another. As Americans, we have always taken great pride in our leisure time activities whatever they may be. However, the topic of leisure in art has not received the attention it deserves. One way to address this neglected subject is to begin by comparing and contrasting the concept of leisure depicted in nineteenth-century genre and still life painting by artists William Sidney Mount (1807-1868) and William Michael Harnett (1848-1892). The writer also plans to examine how these artists reflect larger notions of the place leisure had in American society. However, before a discussion of the artists and their works can commence, the question of why study leisure must be addressed.

Often in the study of art history we are confronted with subjects concerned with the deeds of politicians, generals, intellectuals, and businessmen. The livelihood and daily activities of Americans are brought

to one's attention in the "scenes of everyday life" found in genre painting. Conversely one can become intimately acquainted with the inanimate objects depicted in still life painting. Perhaps the greatest problem though is that those who study art have failed to dedicate academic attention to the problem of explaining and evaluating American's use of free time.

It is important to take into account the concept and activities of leisure, as represented in genre and still life painting during the nineteenth-century, for a number of reasons. First of all, and quite simply, the evidence of leisure in art reveals what people were doing when they were not engaged in earning a living, supporting a family, or sleeping.

Second, the appearance of leisure related activities or objects explains much about the state of industry at this time. The nineteenth-century was a period during which time, in a very real respect, became money. Gary Cross in his book, A Social History of Leisure Since 1600, states:

When the cheap standardized watch emerged in the middle of the nineteenth-century, the possibility of clock discipline became fully realized. The nineteenth-century factory clock - often perched high in its ornate cupola - was both a symbol and a tool for a new work discipline. It reminded all of the fact that time was the new deity and that it meant money.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Gary Cross, A Social History of Leisure Since 1600: (Venture Publishing, Inc. State College, Pa. 1990), p. 58.

This view of Americans as slaves to Father Time can be better understood through examination of time spent in leisure which highlights and clarifies their bondage.

The third and final reason the study of leisure in art is important is because social and economic class is often determined by the leisure activity or to whom the leisure related objects belonged. With a firm foundation and understanding of why the study of leisure is necessary, an investigation of leisure in genre paintings by William Sidney Mount is important.

“History painting says ‘this happened once,’ observes Max Friedlander; ‘genre painting says this happens everyday.’”<sup>2</sup> William Sidney Mount was one of those who convincingly recorded what happened everyday in rural American villages before the Civil War.<sup>3</sup>

William Sidney Mount was raised on a farm near Stony Brook, Long Island. At seventeen he was apprenticed to his brother, a sign and ornament painter in New York City. He went on to study at the National Academy of Design. Later Mount would return to Stony Brook “chiefly

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<sup>2</sup> Alfred Frankenstein, William Sidney Mount (Harry N. Abrams, Inc. Publishers, New York, 1975), p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Alfred Frankenstein, p. 7.

from a native preference for its quiet and innocent pleasures.”<sup>4</sup>

Mount began his professional painting career with landscapes, portraits, and historical paintings. Although he had been offered funds from several sources for European travel and study, he declined them saying, “I have plenty of orders, and I am content to remain a while longer in our own great country.”<sup>5</sup> His [genre] scenes were realistically painted and conveyed a sense of good-natured fun-often displaying rural farmers playing music and dancing.<sup>6</sup>

According to Frankenstein, Mount’s consistent good humor as a genre painter reflects the limitations of a rising American bourgeoisie class unwilling to face the realities of industrialism, poverty, and slavery that were to lead, within the painter’s lifetime, through the Civil War.<sup>7</sup> None of his paintings are devoted to the cosmopolitan society of the city with which his friendship with wealthy patrons made him well acquainted. On the contrary, Mount gave all his attention to the rural life of the Long

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<sup>4</sup> Nancy Moure, American Narrative Painting (Los Angeles County Museum of Art. 1974), p. 63.

<sup>5</sup> Nancy Moure, p. 63.

<sup>6</sup> p. 63.

<sup>7</sup> Alfred Frankenstein, William Sidney Mount, p.10.

Island countryside, depicting his friends and neighbors making cider, dancing in taverns and barns, sharpening an axe, trading horses, courting, playing cards or otherwise engaged in the activities which made up their daily experience.<sup>8</sup>

Williams further observed:

There is never any ambiguity about Mount's anecdotal paintings; the story can always be read at once from the painting and requires no supplementary explanation. Mount did not usually draw on literary sources for subjects. He rightly preferred to rely on his own rich and varied fund of ideas. There is little in Mount's work which reflects contemporary events and nothing which reveals in him a reformer's fervor. His subject matter avoided anything which could be interpreted as editorializing about ephemeral events. He was by nature an observer of his fellow man and a philosopher, not a propagandist. He never touched on the idea of slavery, which was the burning national issue throughout his mature years. Neither was the Civil War, even in its purely local impact, a subject for his brush.<sup>9</sup>

During Mount's time as a genre painter in the first half of the nineteenth-century, industry played an important role in how Americans viewed and responded to this concept of leisure. Therefore, industrialization would influence how Mount would depict his subjects

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<sup>8</sup> Herman Williams, Mirror to the American Past: A Survey of American Genre Painting (Greenwich, Conn., New York Graphic Society, 1973), p. 68.

<sup>9</sup> Herman Williams, p. 70.

engaged in their leisure time activities. "Most of us think of early industrialization in economic terms; miles of machine-produced cotton cloth, newly-enriched factory owners, and impoverished mill hands. Yet this complex process had perhaps a more important effect upon the way people worked and played."<sup>10</sup>

Author Gary Cross comments on the relationship between industrialization and leisure of the nineteenth-century.

The factory institutionalized the Puritan work ethic, imposing it on the masses in the lock-stop movement of the machine and the clock driven demands of the overseer. A more intense work regimen purged much leisure from life and, for the rich and successful, industrialization substituted an ethic of economic accumulation of leisure. The factory imposed a new division in the lives of ordinary people; work time (for income) became separated from family time when jobs were removed from the household and centralized in the workshop or office. The result was an incalculable change in family recreational life. Finally, industrialization meant the disruption of traditional village or community culture as rural workers flooded the new industrial towns and their leisure customs often were lost.<sup>11</sup>

Many observers have described these changes in the negative using the term 'breakdown'. Industrial society meant a loss of "natural rhythms" of work and leisure, an erosion of traditional bonds within families and

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<sup>10</sup> Gary Cross, p. 57.

<sup>11</sup> Gary Cross, p. 57.

between the classes, as well as the degradation of industrial workers, who often sought escape in alcohol and immoderate sensuality.<sup>12</sup>

The consumption of alcohol also played a large role in leisure during the nineteenth-century. Drinking, which was central to traditional peasant leisure,<sup>13</sup> may have, in fact, changed in the industrial context.

Consumption probably increased, as did the number of dispensers of drink in both America and Britain. In the 1820s, American men were drinking, on the average, half a pint of hard liquor per day. Long days of unemployment brought on by trade depressions were often filled by drinking. In many trades, laborers waited in taverns to be called to work by hiring agents. Drink was also an obvious escape from the dead-end visions of the monotonous factory job and the loneliness of the city.<sup>14</sup>

One is left to speculate that the increasing demands of industrialization, and with that an increasing sense of temporality, along with an increase in drinking and promiscuity would give way to the demise and deterioration of the family structure. However, Gary Cross

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<sup>12</sup> Gary Cross, p. 57.

<sup>13</sup> See for example Adraen Brouwer, The Smokers, c. 1636. Metropolitan Museum of Art. New York.

<sup>14</sup> Cross, p. 66.



would disagree.

On the contrary, these trends in industry, alcohol use and sexuality were not unmitigated example of the breakdown of the family. Indeed, despite these signs of atomized leisure, family solidarities survived the decline of the domestic economy. In the Lancashire town of Preston, social historian Michael Anderson has shown that families--far from breaking under the strain of urban and industrial life- actually were strengthened. Family members relied on each other for material and psychological assistance. These economic alliances were solidified in family leisure; early industrialization produced Sunday evening family get togethers and family reunions during annual summer "wakes weeks". If industrialization broke up the extended family, the railroad made possible its reconstruction during holidays.<sup>15</sup>

This brief history lesson of the first half of the nineteenth-century aids in our understanding not only of what was happening during this time in our history, but also how it relates and thus affects the leisure time of Americans, and even more specifically how it relates and affects the genre painting of William Sidney Mount. Among such concepts as industrialization, alcohol consumption, and immoderate sensuality in Cross's description was that of the idea of 'breakdown' albeit in relation to industry or the possible demise of the family structure. This important concept will be considered further for it is the title of the first work by Mount to be examined.

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<sup>15</sup> p. 68.

The Breakdown (also called Bar-room Scene - Walking the Crack), 1835, is one of Mount's earlier paintings (fig. 1). The humorous goodwill seen in the faces watching the dancer is characteristic of Mount's jovial types.<sup>16</sup> In The Breakdown men and boys have come together in the barroom atmosphere to partake in leisurely recreation. The axe has been laid to rest in the vicinity of the cork-bottled ale which is sure to aid the dancers escaping from their individual, ritualistic, and daily routines.

Alongside the ale is a hat which probably belongs to the gentleman who is performing the dance. The circling men gaze with a sense of amusement at the dancer's lightness on his feet. A young boy stands gazing not at the man's feet but instead stares at his face, perhaps even directly into his eyes in order to penetrate his inner being. He does so with a look of joy and admiration. The young lad pinches the brim of his hat as though he is about to hurl it off into the distance and begin to dance with this man. However, the boy's powerful stare along with his right hand placed in his pocket suggests a reluctance for some reason. The observer of the painting notices that this is not the only child present. Off in the distance, standing near the door, is a young black boy who seems quite content participating in this lively moment from afar-as an outsider.

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<sup>16</sup> Nancy Moure, p. 63.



(fig.1)

A final observation one may note of Mount's genre scene may be that of the non-existent clock. In this room time stands still. Mount, in The Breakdown, seems to dismiss the existence of time. One may fill his pipe with tobacco and smoke to his heart's content. There is no pressure to finish a dance, and there will be plenty of drink to refill the empty mug that the dancer holds above his head like that of an innocent halo.

Although it has been said by Herman Williams that, "the story can always be read at once from the painting and requires no supplementary explanation,"<sup>17</sup> it is safe to speculate that Mount may have had a hidden agenda with this painting. Mount's The Breakdown is not interesting simply because of the title's denotative reference to a lively shuffl-ing, American country dance<sup>18</sup>; nor its connection to author Gary Cross' use of the word breakdown in his description of the social history of leisure during the first half of the nineteenth-century. It is interesting because of its connotative definition. Meaning, The Breakdown as a painting may indeed refer to the break-down of leisure and family caused by industry. Specifically, Mount, during his stay in New York, may have seen for

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<sup>17</sup> Herman Williams, Mirror to the American Past: A survey of American Genre Painting, (Greenwich. Conn., New York, Graphic Society. 1973), p. 68.

<sup>18</sup> David B. Guralnik, Webster's New World Dictionary (Simons and Schuster, Inc. 1984), p. 174.

himself what author Gary Cross described earlier as, "...the disruption of traditional village or community culture...where leisure customs were lost."<sup>19</sup> Thus, in any event, one may only speculate about the possible validity of the above opinion; however, there is one thing we know for sure. William Sidney Mount's painting does indeed display an excellent example of men and their leisure time activities during this time in history.

Hunting is another type of a leisure activity during this period in the nineteenth-century. As it has been stated before, Mount preferred to do genre painting depicting country scenes rather than those of the city. Those individuals who lived in the country did not have the wealth to support lavish hunting weaponry. Often the hunt would consist of a test of wits, some type of trap, and patience. This activity frequently led either to the hunter's next meal or to money in his pocket for the animals' pelts. This understanding of the hunt leads to the next example of William Sidney Mount's genre painting, Trap Sprung (The Dead Fall), 1844 (fig. 2).

Here, in Trap Sprung, Mount shows two young boys excitedly approaching one of their traps, which as the title suggests, has sprung. The boys are most likely brothers due to the difference in their coats.

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<sup>19</sup> Gary Cross, p. 57

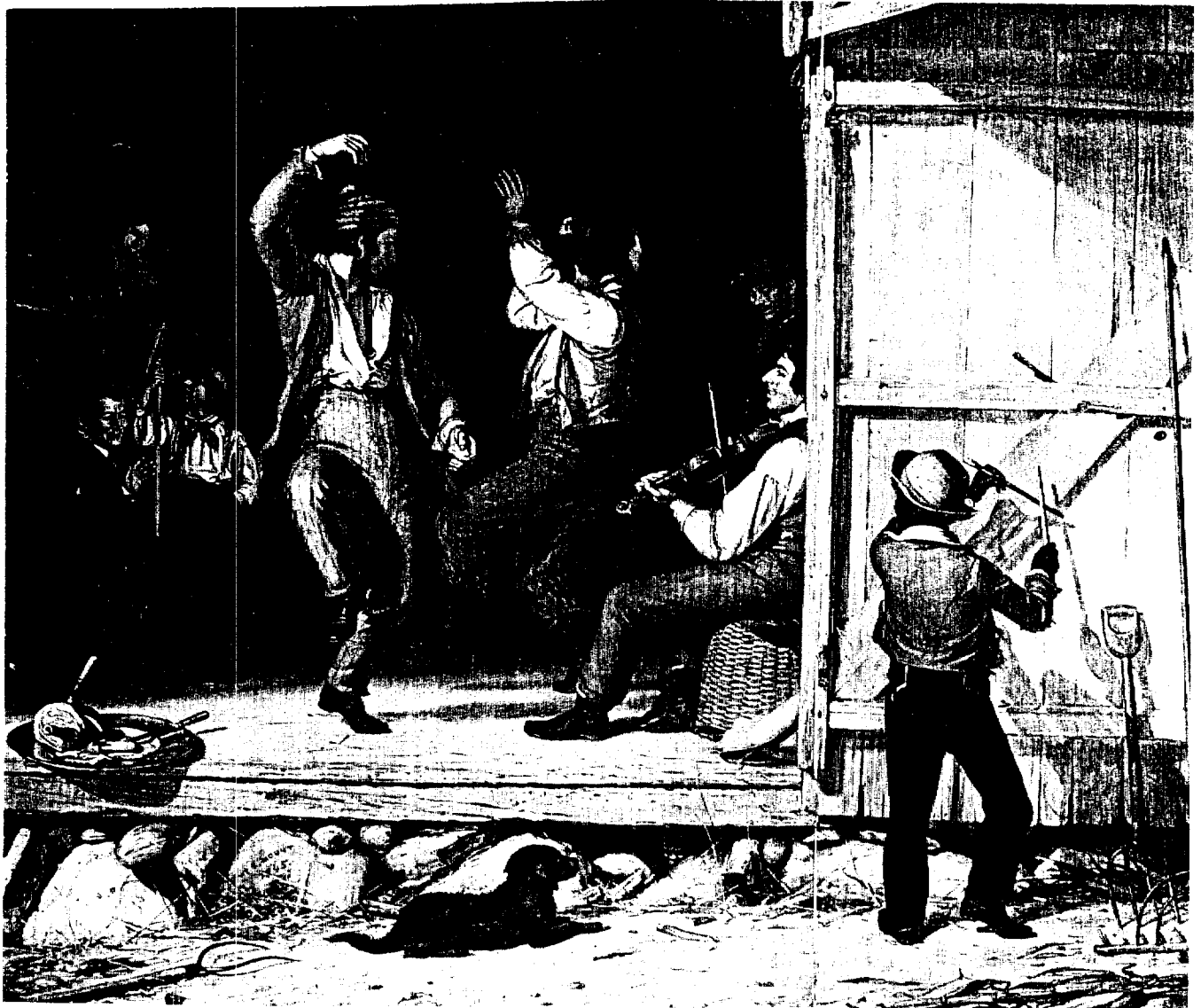


(fig. 2)

Specifically, the coat of the smaller child comes across as more worn or tattered than the larger and older child, which suggests a hand-me-down. The painting tells the story of boys and their youth. It speaks of adventure and exploration. Trap Sprung identifies with the innocence of boyhood and its delicate balance with the activities related to the rite of passage when becoming a man was achieved through such a leisure related activity.

Thus far in the discussion of leisure of the nineteenth-century, as portrayed in the works of William Sidney Mount, such concepts have been considered as men and their social leisure as it relates to drinking, dancing, and smoking apparent in The Breakdown, and boys in their social leisure as it relates to hunting in Trap Sprung. Finally, we come to the last work of William Sidney Mount's to be examined in its relation to the concept of leisure--Dance of the Haymakers (Music is Contagious), 1845 (fig. 3). Dance of the Haymakers is a conglomeration of leisure time activities and ideas which reflects the larger notion of the place leisure has in American society.

The day's work has been completed and the tools have been laid to rest. A violin has been brought out and is being played, and like the title states, the music is contagious as can be seen by the men dancing ever so enthusiastically. Both food and drink are present suggesting an



(fig. 3)



atmosphere of celebration. Again a young white boy participates in the festivities in the barn while a young black boy looks inside with a smile as can be noted by the rise of the cheekbone. The black boy has also been afflicted with the contagious virus of music as he is seen drumming on the outside of the barn door. Even the cat and dog look as if they have had a leisurely game of chase and now are playing hide and seek. Something that is very unique, however, is that of the presence of young women in the loft above.

The inclusion of these women suggests a strong family environment which helps to support author Gary Cross' ideas that the demands of industry and the ever increasing presence of alcohol did not weaken or break down the family structure. That is to say at least not when considering the Haymakers of Stony Brook, Long Island. On the other hand, maybe the females in the loft are what may be described as "loose women" or single/unattached women who are sneaking a peek at the joyous celebration below and anxiously awaiting companionship for the evening.

This conglomeration of leisure activities by Mount seems to suggest that if one could engage in these routines, life would somehow be made better. In any event, William Sidney Mount's genre painting does indeed

reveal much about the American people of the first half of the nineteenth-century.

Likewise, the still life paintings of William Michael Harnett also express a great deal about the leisure of the American people in the second half of the nineteenth-century. As with the paintings by Mount, one must first begin an exploration of William Harnett by constructing a firm foundation describing in detail his background both as an individual and as an artist.

Harnett was born in Ireland in 1848 but moved to Philadelphia as a small child. His family was extremely poor. His father died when Harnett was still a youth, and he was forced to help support his mother and sisters. After working as an errand boy he eventually found employment with a firm that did silver engraving. He was able to take some night classes at the Philadelphia Academy of Art and in New York, where he lived for several years at the National Academy of Design and the Cooper Institute. But money was always tight. Harnett states, 'I could not afford to hire models as other students did,' he told a New York reporter years later. 'I was forced to paint my first picture from still life models. These were a pipe and a German beer mug. I think it brought \$50.' The sum seemed to Harnett a small fortune, and with that encouragement he decided to abandon engraving and concentrate on painting for a livelihood. Throughout his career he worked meticulously, concentrating on a single painting at a time, creating a fineness of detail worthy of a bank note engraver. Indeed, the most widely publicized episode of his career occurred after he began to paint highly realistic renderings of money and was arrested by Treasury Department agents for forgery. Fortunately, he was

released without being charged, but he quickly gave up that sort of subject matter.<sup>20</sup>

Harnett painted a group of pictures in the 1870's in which texture rather than form was emphasized. These paintings show [expensive] beer mugs, tobacco pipes, and newspapers carefully arranged to give a casual appearance. "I [Wolfgang Born] should like to call these paintings 'bachelor still lifes'-an expression which, in a certain sense, characterizes Harnett's work in general; for the world of the woman is practically excluded from all of it."<sup>21</sup> "The many 'bachelor' canvases in Harnett's work (over two dozen) are a reflection of Harnett's patron: a man of business, who had some leisure, and ample means, whose life afforded a regular measure of masculine autonomy and time for reflection."<sup>22</sup> Also, in these bachelor still lifes Harnett goes to extreme lengths to characterize textures.

Wolfgang Born notes that Harnett . . .

...distinguishes the porous earthenware of an unglazed mug from the smooth surface of the meerschaum pipe by giving its color a rough, sand-like grain. It is worth noticing that Harnett

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<sup>20</sup> Henry Adams, "Will the Real William Harnett Please Stand Up", Smithsonian (March 1992), p. 52.

<sup>21</sup> Wolfgang Born, Still Life Painting in America, (Oxford University Press, New York, 1947), p. 32.

<sup>22</sup> Johanna Drucker, "Harnett", Haberle, and Peto: "Visuality and Artifice Among the ProtoModern Americans". The Art Bulletin, (March 1992), p.39.

never resorted to this or a similar device when he painted living things like apples or cantaloupes. On the contrary he avoided giving a natural, organic aspect to the fruits he painted. This coincides well with his bias against painting portraits. He shuns real life and prefers to project his own life into dead things.<sup>23</sup>

Born continues his analysis by stating, "...most of his [Harnett's] still lifes suggest that the owner of the objects had just left the room, after dropping them carelessly on the table. A tobacco pipe is on a folded newspaper; its contents, the half burned tobacco, are spread on the table; broken matches with blackened ends are strewn about (fig. 6). We observe that some glow is left and is about to burn a hole in the newspaper, and since the whole picture is painted in a manner akin to that of trompe l'oeil, we feel tempted to extinguish the fire."<sup>24</sup>

Harnett's paintings mediated between the worlds of spiritual contemplation and social action, reflected in such items as money, letters, newspapers, and hunting paraphernalia. Harnett's paintings remind us of how much we love the simple things in life, things with smell and texture-weathered wood, old leather-bound books, the feel of a feather.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Wolfgang Born, p. 32.

<sup>24</sup> Wolfgang Born, p. 32.

<sup>25</sup> Henry Adams, p. 62.

In the overtone of Harnett's work there is advice, consolation in the face of affliction. Try to derive he seems to say in a low voice, a gentle pleasure from the humble things of your own life, and they will become friends in your misfortune.<sup>26</sup>

"By mid-19th century mass leisure penetrated the hard working and newly rich middle class, who were breaking away from the strictness against pleasure seeking. The children of the Puritan workaholic businessmen of the mid century had embraced 'The Gospel of Relaxation' by the 1850s."<sup>27</sup> From the 1850s in Britain, Henry Solly's Working Men's Social Clubs sought to combine education with entertainment and unrestrained social intercourse. These clubs, located in most English towns and cities, provided rooms for reading as well as regulated drinking, opportunities for cards and other games, and space for a vast array of musical, sports, and other evening and Saturday afternoon leisure activity for adult men.<sup>28</sup> Other less healthful pleasures like smoking increased by 300 percent in the second half of the century.<sup>29</sup>

Harnett's 'bachelor paintings' can be read both as instances of a

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<sup>26</sup> Wolfgang Born, p. 35.

<sup>27</sup> Gary Cross, p. 126.

<sup>28</sup> p. 95.

<sup>29</sup> p. 125.

formula and as highly particular studies of portraits revealing character through the choice of mug, pipe, and paper combination. In The Social Club, for example, the arrangement of pipes as they stand abandoned, in relation to each other, reads as a portrait gallery of their owners (fig. 4). Each pipe reveals its own character and pattern of use, as well as appearing to display the particular physical gestures of its owner according to the position in which it had been placed on the counter. A masculine discourse hangs like heavy smoke in the air above the artfully arranged spokes of the pipe stems, rotating in the thick atmosphere.<sup>30</sup>

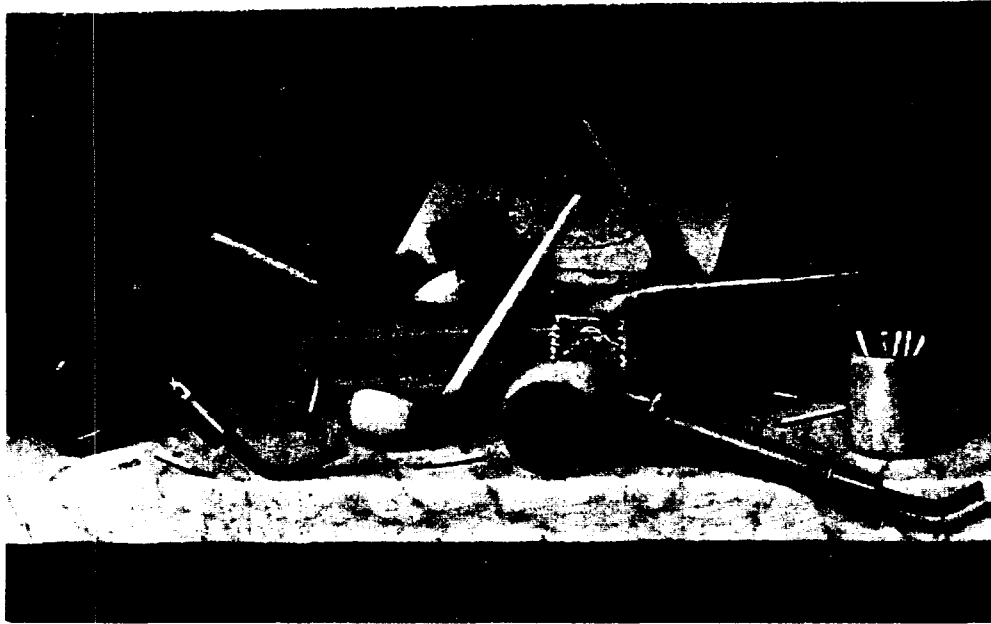
Hunting was an elite pastime in England. Long associated with ownership of land and possession of weapons, it was usually the privilege of the European aristocracy. Humbler people had neither the right to hunting lands nor the money to afford handcrafted firearms.<sup>31</sup>

Hare hunting was an exception to the aristocratic character of European hunting. Middling farmers as well as country gentleman kept dogs to pursue the rabbit, a widespread nuisance. Gradually in the 18th century, however, the gentry adopted the more difficult sport of fox hunting. Fox hunters took as much pleasure in their hounds as they did in

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<sup>30</sup> Johanna Drucker, p. 40.

<sup>31</sup> Gary Cross, p. 44.



(fig. 4)

the hunt itself. The event was surrounded by an elaborate ritual - the early morning breakfast, the horn call, and fox hunting fashion.<sup>32</sup>

In contrast, wildlife was so plentiful that the colonists were often unrestrained in the slaughter of such birds as wild turkeys, partridges, and especially pigeons, setting a trend that would be reversed only at the end of the 19th century. During the annual migration, carrier pigeons were so numerous that they would darken the sky; hunters not only shot them but struck them down in huge numbers with poles when they landed on the trees to rest. The peculiar characteristic of American hunting, its uniquely popular and wasteful form, was the product of an open frontier environment.<sup>33</sup>

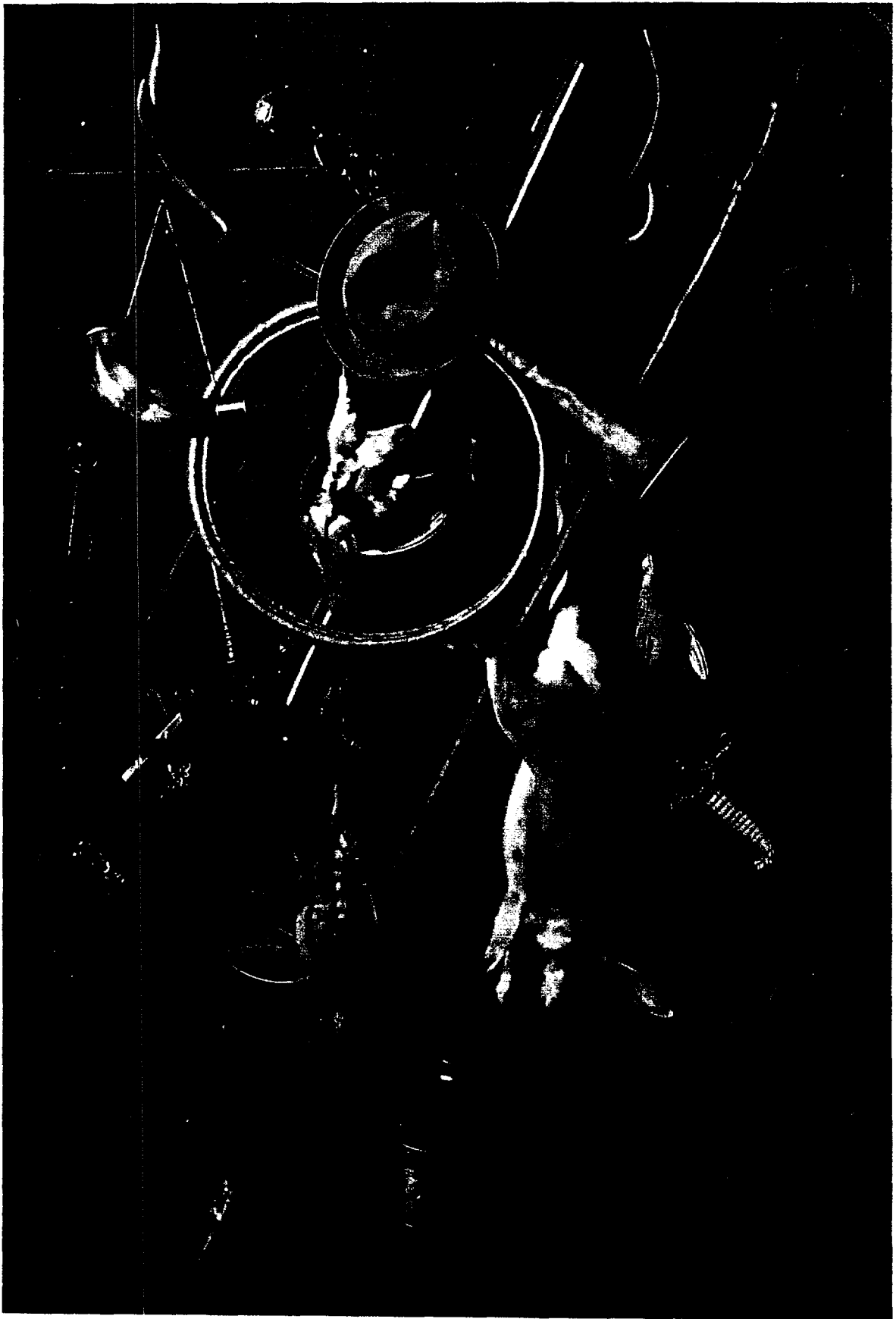
William Michael Harnett's After the Hunt, 1885 (fig. 5), is a painting which takes into account many aspects of the leisurely sport of hunting characterized by both Europe and America. After the Hunt contains European influences perhaps as a result of the artist spending time in Paris between 1884 and 1886 where he created this version of the painting which had several predecessors by the same name. As the name implies the picture is a still life of game and equipment used by hunters - gun,

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<sup>32</sup> Gary Cross, p.44.

<sup>33</sup> p. 45.





(fig. 5)

horn, knife, and powder-horn. The arrangements in the background became the epitome of trompe l'oeil - the eye was denied access to spatial recession by the impregnable door and the hanging forms, arranged vertically, projected out into the viewer's space.<sup>34</sup>

One can easily see how Harnett has so eloquently displayed these objects of leisure pertaining to the hunt in iconic form. He has masterfully given the viewer, not merely a taste, but one might say a feast, of the pleasures and plentifulness of a successful hunt that only the upper class could afford. However, hunting is but only one leisure time activity Harnett depicts in his still life painting. Time also plays a significant role in Harnett's work.

“‘All society,’ says the French thinker Jaques Attali, ‘is constructed around a sense of time.’”<sup>35</sup> Author Gary Cross states, “temporality is both a matter of technology and politics: changes in the means of measuring time has a decisive affect on how we organize society. Moreover, whoever controls the use and significance of other people's time has power over them. These two factors come together in the advent of the modern clock

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<sup>34</sup> William Gerdts, Painters of the Humble Truth, (University of Missouri Press. Columbia and Lincoln, 1981), p. 159.

<sup>35</sup> Gary Cross, p. 74.

and the industrialist.”<sup>36</sup>

Cross further comments,

...it is a commonplace that the cadence of preindustrial societies was often marked by feasts and fasts organized by the clergy. The dominant attitude toward time was the notion of recurrence - the eternal repetition of nature- and the desire to merge past with present. This attitude sharply contrasts with the rhythms of industrial society where work and society are synchronized and paced by the immutable regularity of the clock in service to business and industry. The driving compulsion in the modern world is mechanical regularity and the anticipation of the future in the present. Society no longer seems to suppress time, rather the object is to “gain” and “save” it.<sup>37</sup>

The final work by William Michael Harnett to be examined is Messengers of Peace, 1890 (fig. 6). Messengers of Peace, like The Social Club and After the Hunt, is among those in the ‘bachelor series’ reflecting the ideas of maleness. Other similarities include the fact that this painting is given very shallow space, has a great sense of frontality, is done in Harnett’s characteristic trompe l’oeil style, and also has a majestic sense of time.

Messengers of Peace reflects many of the concepts that Gary Cross presented and more. As one looks at this painting, it is noted that many of

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<sup>36</sup> Gary Cross, p. 74.

<sup>37</sup> Gary Cross, p. 74.



(fig. 6)

the objects contained in the still life relate to the concept of time. Music is timed, a newspaper is dated, books are copyrighted, alcohol is aged, and flames burn out before our very eyes. Like Cross, Harnett suggests we save time and savor these objects of leisure. He wants us enjoy the music, remain up-to-date on current events, engage in literature, relish fine drink and savor the sweet tobacco of a pipe before time runs out like the pipe is about to and as the candle has already done. He asks us to 'stop and smell the roses'. One might even go as far to say that Harnett is suggesting 'All work and no play make Johnny a dull boy'. In any event, Harnett, in essence, says to the viewer in a consoling tone, that these objects before you are the messengers of peace. Savor them. Make time to engage in these pursuits and peace will be with you.

Until now William Sidney Mount and William Michael Harnett have been studied separately. At this time it is worth noting some similarities as well as differences between the two artists. To begin with, both Mount and Harnett are painters of leisure in their own rights. One concentrates on genre and the other still life. Mount's genre paintings are painted realistically, but may be seen as painterly, in manner and style, in relation to the magnificent trompe l'oeil for which Harnett is known. One can also consider subject matter when comparing and contrasting the two artists.

Both Mount and Harnett dealt primarily with men, albeit directly and indirectly, as subjects for their works, however, they each depicted a different class of man. Mount painted rural life scenes of a lower middle class whereas Harnett obliquely portrayed, by his choice of objects, aristocratic individuals. When looking at the subject matter of specific works, one also finds similarities. Consider for instance, Mount's, The Breakdown (fig. 1) compared to Harnett's, The Social Club (fig. 4). Again, both deal with men in relation to their leisure time activities and objects. Mount displays what could easily be considered a social club of men. The leisure activity of smoking is represented in both works. The concept of the hunt as a leisure activity is shared in both Mount's, Trap Sprung (fig. 2) and Harnett's, After the Hunt (fig. 5). In Mount's, Dance of the Haymakers and Harnett's Messengers of Peace there is similarity in theme. Both works are conglomerations of leisure activities and objects which encourage and invite the viewer to participate while reflecting the larger notions of the place of leisure in American society.

One particularly interesting final similarity found is the fact that both Mount and Harnett studied at the National Academy of Design in New York. One is left to speculate on how many of the similarities found in the works of these two artists can be accounted for from this parallelism of

formal education.

In summary, much has been learned in the study of leisure depicted in nineteenth-century genre and still life painting by William Sidney Mount and William Michael Harnett. It is understood that leisure plays an important role in American society and art, and that the subject of leisure in art has not been given the attention it so rightly deserves. Two great American artists have been explored. In that exploration depictions of such leisure related activities as dancing, smoking, drinking, eating, playing music, and hunting have been discovered. The influence of socio-political factors on leisure in American society has been beautifully displayed in Mount's, Dance of the Haymakers and Harnett's, Messengers of Peace. The artists and their works have been examined as separate entities and then brought together to reveal similarities. In the end one must conclude that the study of leisure in art has a place in art history and that William Sidney Mount and William Michael Harnett represent magnificently the forms and meanings of leisure in American society both past and present.

## **Part II**

### **Discover Leisure**



## **Introduction**

## **Discover Leisure**

THIS UNIT IS INTENDED TO BE PART OF A BASIC REQUIRED MIDDLE SCHOOL OR JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL ART COURSE ORGANIZED ON THE THEME, "LEISURE IN ART." In this unit, students will focus on the concept of leisure as it relates in general to the past, present and future; and specifically how leisure relates to the students themselves. This will be accomplished by exploring a number of areas in art history, aesthetics, criticism, and production. At the end of this unit the students will produce an exhibition of their achievements. It is intended to further introduce middle school students to the ideas of discipline-based instruction derived from the four art disciplines. The classes would meet five times a week for 50-minute sessions for 6 weeks.

### **Lesson Topics**

1. Why Study Leisure. What is leisure and what does it have to offer?

Plus, a community building exercise.

2. Leisure in Art. Examples of Leisure found in works by William Sidney

Mount and William Michael Harnett.

3. In the News. Art and leisure in the news

4. In Search of...Museum visit

5. Artist Reports

6. Games in Art. Students will experience different leisure activities that art has to offer.
7. Put it all together! Production time
8. Craftsmanship. Making your work look the best it can.
9. Sharing Time. Students will share what they found out about their artists and then we will as a class critique each others work.
10. So What Have You Learned? Students will be quizzed on what they have learned about art and leisure.
11. Celebration Thursday! Students will work together to display their work for the community.

Lesson1 topic/subject\_\_\_Why Study Leisure?\_(Intro. to DBAE)\_\_\_

## PREINSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING

What is leisure and what does the study of leisure have to offer?

Focus:

Leisure and art are integral parts of our society. Examining how each relates to the other reveals much about the ways in which we spend our time.

Objectives:

-Students will illustrate basic knowledge about the concept of leisure and how it relates to art.

Material/special arrangements/individual modifications:

Schedule:

1 session

## DURING INSTRUCTION

Introduction/establishing set:

1. Introduce components of DBAE and how class will be different
2. Community Building Exercise-

If this is the first time with this group of students some type of community building exercise will be done to get to know each other. Attempt to build an environment of trust, respect, and communication. For example, share a

bag of M&Ms with the class. Ask each student to take a few. Then go around the room having the students answer questions about themselves that correlate with the color of the M&M. For instance:

Red- What is your favorite type of music or group?

Orange- What is something you like to do in your spare time?

Green- Who is your favorite artist? Why?

Brown- What do you like about art?

Yellow- What do you dislike about art?

Blue- ? (Have students make up their own question to answer with Blue).

\*If you are already familiar with the class...

Ask students what the concept of leisure means and once the class seems to have a good idea introduce the game of Leisure Charades.

Play Leisure Charades

1. Have students list on a scrap piece of paper what they do when they are not at school or sleeping (Teacher plays too).
2. Collect the pieces of paper and place them in a container.
3. Have each student select a piece of paper from the container (Teacher selects too).
4. Teacher goes first and acts out the leisure charade that was chosen. The first student to guess right gets to go next!

Presenting new information/material:

Discuss the relevance and importance of leisure in our society.

-What kinds of things do we do with our leisure time?

-How much leisure time do we have?

-How does social stratification effect leisure?

-What kinds of leisure objects (toys, balls, games, t.v.'s, etc.) do we have?

-Are some leisure activities better than others? Why?

-What are some leisure activities of the past? How were things different?

How were things the same?

Explain how the concept of leisure will be the topic for the next six weeks

Definitions: Art History, Art Criticism, Art Production, and Aesthetics

-Leisure Charades, Leisure

Guided practice: Homework Assignment. Be sure to photocopy enough to handout to the class. Explain directions and expectations (grading). Use whatever art text is available.

## POSTINSTRUCTIONAL

Evaluation of student learning:

Formal:

20 points available.

0 points = NC (No Credit) for not completing the assignment as instructed by the Beginning of the next class period.

Informal: Did students participate in the class discussion and play the game?

Evaluation of the lesson

## **Homework Assignment #1: Why Study Leisure**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Choose two works of art from your Understanding Art text and list the following (5 pts each):

- A.     1. Title / page #-  
          2. Artist-  
          3. How is the concept of leisure is being depicted?
- B       1. Title / page #-  
          2. Artist-  
          3. How is the concept of leisure is being depicted?

10 pts. Chose one of the two images and draw it on the back to the best of your ability.  
Put yourself in the artist's shoes as he or she would have created the work of art.

## **Homework Assignment #1: Why Study Leisure**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Choose two works of art from your Understanding Art text and list the following (5 pts each):

- A.     1. Title / page #-  
          2. Artist-  
          3. How is the concept of leisure is being depicted?
- B       1. Title / page #-  
          2. Artist-  
          3. How is the concept of leisure is being depicted?

10 pts. Chose one of the two images and draw it on the back to the best of your ability.  
Put yourself in the artist's shoes as he or she would have created the work of art.

Lesson 2 topic/subject\_\_Leisure in Art\_\_\_\_\_

## PREINSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING

William Sidney Mount (WSM) and William Michael Harnett (WMH) provide excellent depictions of Americans in the nineteenth-century.

### Focus:

In nineteenth-century art we find various displays of leisure, such as dancing, smoking, drinking, hunting, reading, playing music, etc. Artists, albeit directly or indirectly, have always been interested in the depiction of leisure; look at selected artworks and see how each one expresses the concept of leisure in the nineteenth-century.

### Objectives:

-Students will critique the works of William Sidney Mount and William Michael Harnett relative to the concept of leisure.

### Material/special arrangements/individual modifications:

Photographs, photocopies, and/or slides of works by William Sidney Mount and William Michael Harnett (see List of Illustrations)

### Schedule:

1-2 sessions

Select information from the research on William Sidney Mount and William Michael Harnett to share with the class.



## DURING INSTRUCTION

Introduction/establishing set:

- Show one image by WSM and one by WMH
- Ask the following questions for each example
  - What do you see? (Anything. What are the visuals? Ele-Prin?)
  - How is leisure represented?
  - When do you think this was done?
  - What kind of people are they? (WSM)
  - What kind of people used these objects? (WMH)
  - Were these done by the same artist? Why or why not.

Presenting new information/material:

- Brief artist biography (point out who is who in the examples)

Definitions: genre, still life, tromp l'oeil (Place definitions on black board before class)

Guided practice:

- Show other examples of works by WSM and WMH
- Ask the following questions:
  - What do you see?
  - Who did it and how can you tell?
  - How is the concept of leisure represented?

-What are the differences in social class?

-What would WSM and/or WMH paint today to represent  
leisure activities or objects?

#### POSTINSTRUCTIONAL

Evaluation of student learning:

Formal:

Attitude and Effort = 10 POINTS

Informal: Discussion

Evaluation of the lesson

Lesson 3 topic/subject\_\_\_In the News\_\_\_\_\_

### PREINSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING

Students can learn much about the society and culture in which we live by examining a newspaper. In this particular exercise students will find examples of leisure described by a newspaper.

#### Objectives:

- Students will be able to give examples of leisure related activities in today's society
- Students will be able to evaluate the value of a newspaper as it reflects different issues related to art and society.

#### Material/special arrangements/individual modifications:

Enough newspapers for the class (donated by local distributor or brought in by teacher/students)

#### Schedule:

1 session

### DURING INSTRUCTION

#### Introduction/establishing set:

Teacher acts like a newspaper salesperson as students come into class saying, "Extra-Extra! Read all about. Leisure in the News!" while handing out newspapers.

Presenting new information/material:

Teacher will ask students the following questions.

-What is this? (Holding up a newspaper)

-What can be found in it?

-Who looks at/reads it?

-What does this tell us about us?

Definitions:

Guided practice:

-In class Assignment: Have students work on the IN THE NEWS Worksheet (make enough copies and go through the worksheet with the class. Answer any questions).

\* If students use sketchbooks try something like this...

Sketchbook - Imagine you have access to a time machine. Your mission is to travel forward in time to find out how people (grandparents, parents, kids) spend their leisure time. Journal your thoughts and draw a picture of the leisure time objects or people engaged in their leisure time activities. Be prepared to discuss.

## POSTINSTRUCTIONAL

Evaluation of student learning:

Formal:

Grade worksheet- 10 point scale

10 points = A, 9 points = A-, 8 points = B, 7 points = C, 6 points  
= D, 5 and under = NC

Informal: None

Evaluation of the lesson

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## ***IN THE NEWS!***

Many of us take art for granted. We do not realize that art is all around us. We see evidence of art everyday on the television, in magazines, and right outside our windows. Another place we find art is in the newspaper.

Look through a newspaper. You do not have to read every article. Instead skim through the newspaper looking for articles dealing with art and issues of leisure. Look for events, advertisements, and ways of communication which are artistic. Fill out the requested information on this worksheet and be prepared to discuss your findings.

Name of

newspaper: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Publication: \_\_\_\_\_

Something dealing with art in my newspaper was \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Something dealing with leisure in my newspaper was

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Some Elements and Principles of Art in the newspaper are...

Elements-

Principles-

Explain the relevance of each of the four components of DBAE as seen in the newspaper.

Art History-

Art Criticism-

Art Aesthetics-

Art Production-

I like using the newspaper

because \_\_\_\_\_

I dislike using the newspaper because

\_\_\_\_\_

A cartoon I liked was \_\_\_\_\_ Because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Lesson 4 topic/subject\_\_In Search of...\_\_\_\_\_

#### PREINSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING

This is a museum related activity intended to arouse interest and curiosity about works of art in a museum setting as well as engage the students in various activities related to DBAE and the concept of Leisure.

Objectives: (all accomplished via a museum workbook)

- Students will provide examples of elements and principles found in a variety of works of art.
- Students will provide examples of the concept of leisure or leisure objects found in various works of art.
- Students will criticize works of art.
- Students will reflect on issues pertaining to Art History and Aesthetics (heart, house, time, yuck symbol, question game).
- Students will sketch ideas for their final production piece(s).
- Students will evaluate the museum visit

Material/special arrangements/individual modifications:

- Plan at least 2-3 weeks in advance by asking permission to remove students from the regular school day, arranging for travel, getting permission slips (ask for chaperons too), emergency medical forms, etc.

See following pages for examples of materials to use when planning a field



trip.

Schedule:

1 school day

#### DURING INSTRUCTION

Introduction/establishing set:

Museum Workbook

Presenting new information/material:

Museum Workbook

Definitions:

Describe, Interpret, Analyze, Judge, Elements, Principles

Guided practice:

Museum Workbook

#### POSTINSTRUCTIONAL

Evaluation of student learning:

Formal:

Assign up to 10 points for participation

10 points = A, 9 points = A-, 8 points = B, 7 points = C, 6 points  
= D, 5 and under = NC

Informal:

Evaluation of the lesson

Date

Teachers:

I am planning a field trip to the Art Institute of Chicago for \_\_\_\_\_. I apologize for any inconvenience that this trip may pose. If you can think of any reason why students from your class would not be able to participate please contact me A.S.A.P. I would appreciate hearing your concerns.

Students will be called over the PA system at 8:45 a.m. We will be returning at 2:30. p.m. The students are responsible to check with you for any work or test that will need to be made up.

Below is a list of students who would be going on the field trip.

Sincerely,

Dear Parent(s) / Guardian:

The 7th grade art class will be going to the Chicago Art Institute on \_\_\_\_\_. We will be leaving the school by bus at 9:00 a.m. and return by 2:30 p.m. I feel that this trip offers wonderful academic and artistic opportunities.

The objectives for the trip are as follows:

\*Students should be able to:

- gain a more specific knowledge of art movements and styles
- develop a more specific awareness of both communication and criticism skills
- demonstrate knowledge of the elements and principles of art
- develop creativity as he/she expresses visually ideas, values, and feelings

Also, I would like to extend an invitation to you accompany us on this trip as a chaperon (currently, there is a need for 6-10). I highly encourage any and all parental participation. If you are interested and available, please indicate so on the form below.

It is important to note that there is no cost for the trip. However, each student and/or chaperon needs to bring a sack lunch.

If you have any questions whatsoever, please feel free to call or stop by the art room.

Sincerely,

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Permission Slip for Art Institute Field Trip

\*Please return this portion by: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

\_\_\_\_\_ has my permission to travel to the Art Institute of Chicago for an all day field trip on \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_\_\_.

Also, please check one.

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes! I am available to chaperon the field trip.

\_\_\_\_\_ No. I am sorry that I will be unable to participate as a chaperon for the field trip.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
(please sign your name on the line above)

Dear Parent,

I am enthusiastic and pleased that you are available to chaperon our trip to the Art Institute of Chicago on the \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_\_\_ .

I would like to remind you that we are scheduled to leave at 9:00 a.m. In light of that departure time, I would ask that you arrive at 8:30 so that we may discuss the days' events, make some name tags, talk about discipline. I can answer any questions you may have. Please come to the main office and ask to be directed to the conference room. I will see if I can't have some nice hot coffee waiting for you.!

Thank you for your time and participation. Without such involvement this trip would not be possible. I look forward to working with you. Again, if I may be of any assistance prior to our meeting, please feel free to call me at home at \_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_.

Sincerely,